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Farm Service Agency

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Biden Administration Appoints Dr. Emily Cole to Serve as State Executive Director for USDA's Farm Service Agency in Connecticut

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WASHINGTON, May 19, 2022— The Biden Administration recently appointed Dr. Emily Cole as the new State Executive Director (SED) for the USDA Connecticut Farm Service Agency (FSA). Cole joined the Connecticut FSA team on May 16, 2022.

“Individuals selected to serve as FSA State Executive Directors are incredible public servants who have a proven track record when it comes to their commitment to advance their states and communities,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “Each will serve on the frontlines, carrying out USDA’s mission at the state level and ensuring the voice of each and every USDA customer is heard. We are fortunate to have each of these talented individuals at this critical time for farmers and producers and rural communities across America.”

Cole previously served as the New England Regional Deputy Director for American Farmland Trust (AFT), a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting farmland, promoting sound farming practices, and keeping farmers on the land. As Deputy Director, she developed AFT’s New England regional Climate and Agriculture program focused on supporting farmers across New England in their efforts to adopt climate smart agriculture through innovative technical and financial assistance, which includes the largest soil health project in New England history.

Cole is passionate about improving all Connecticut farmers’ access to financial and technical assistance to support farm viability and the vitality of Connecticut agriculture. Cole has 18 years of experience as an educator in the field and in the classroom. She earned her Ph.D. in Plant and Soil Sciences from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and her research focused on improving soil health and carbon sequestration on farmland in the Connecticut River Valley. While at UMass, she was a part of the Crops, Dairy, Livestock, and Equine Extension Team. Cole also holds a Master’s degree in Science Education from Boston University and a Bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from Kenyon College. Cole lives in Simsbury, CT with her husband Ray, a professor at Southern Connecticut State University, and their daughter.

As SED, Cole will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of FSA programs to agricultural producers in Connecticut. These commodity, conservation, credit, and disaster assistance programs ensure a safe, affordable, abundant, and nutritious food, fiber, and fuel supply for consumers.

“The State Executive Director is a pivotal leadership position for the Agency and for the agricultural producers we serve,” said Marcus Graham, FSA Deputy Administrator for Field Operations. “These leaders, appointed by the Biden-Harris Administration, bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to their respective states. We are happy to have them on board and wish them much success.”

Farm Service Agency serves farmers, ranchers, foresters, and agricultural partners through the effective, efficient, and equitable delivery of federal agricultural programs. The Agency offers producers a strong safety net through the administration of farm commodity and disaster programs. Additionally, through conservation programs, FSA continues to preserve and protect natural resources and provides credit to agricultural producers who are unable to receive private, commercial credit, including targeted loan funds for beginning, underserved, women and military veterans involved in production agriculture.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit usda.gov.

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